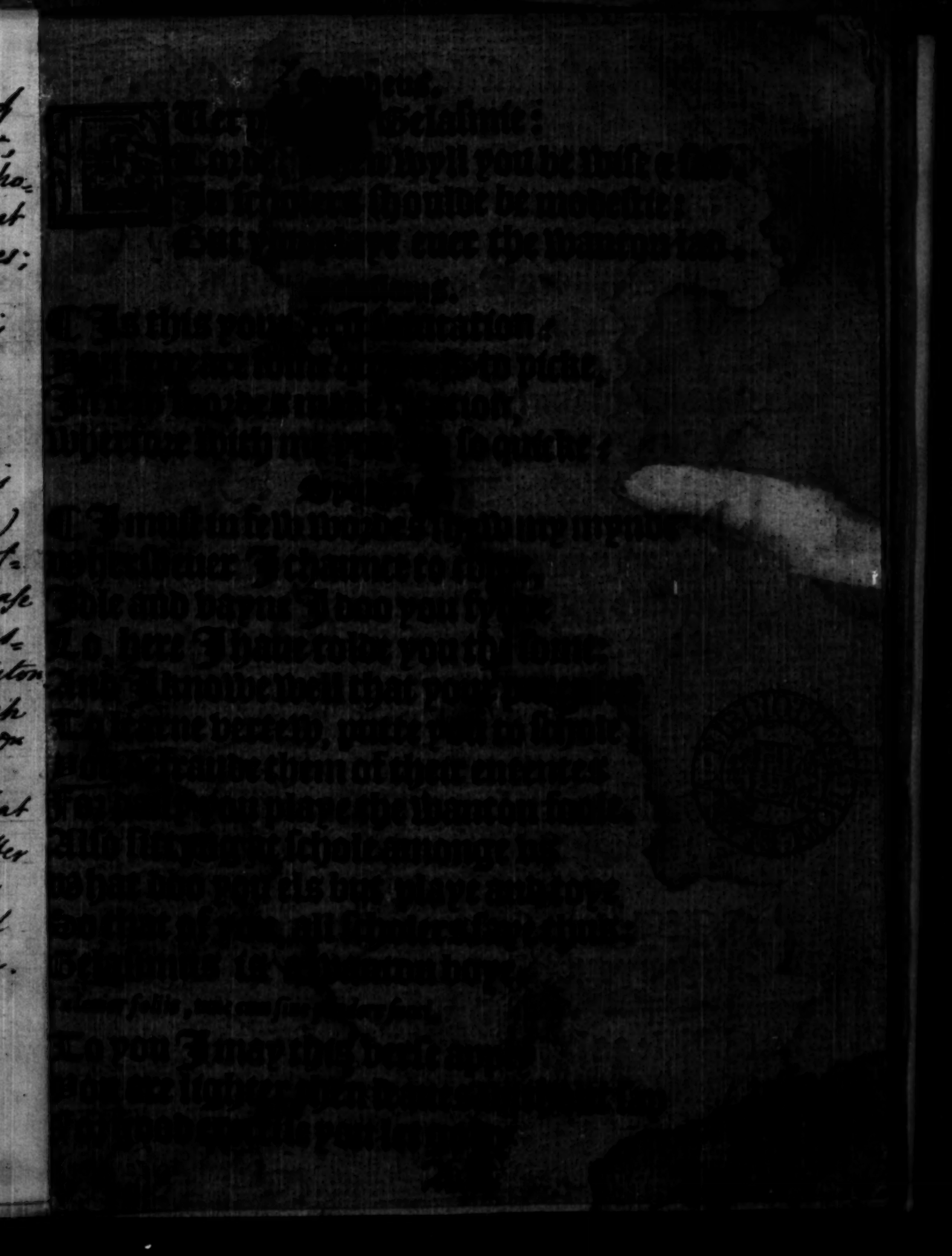

John Fisher the author of this book, was a native of Abingdon Berks. doubtless educated at Winchester, and as appears from the College Register, elected Scholar of new College in 1562. He was it seems a student in Oxford before that year as this volume clearly proves; and it is possible that he might succeed to some unexpected vacancy. In 1564 at the close of his probation, he was admitted fellow.

Fisher was suspected of being popishly affected, and at the visitation of the Queens commissioners, certain libels (among others is enumerated, a Knack to know a Knave) and prohibited books being found in his possession, the College was induced to send his case before the visitor; the result of which was a suspension from his fellowship by the Bp. of Winton. This was in 1573. Towards the close of which year (in Oct) he voted at the election of Dr Culpeper for warden, but his vote was objected to by the scrutators on the ground that he was then under suspension. Shortly after he resigned his fellowship, for on the 24th of December following his vacancy was filled up by the ~~election~~ admission of Adam Stome.

Spudeus.

EVer playing Gelasime:
Lorde, when wyll you be wise & sad.
In scholers shoulde be modestie:
But you playe euer the wanton lad.

Gelasimus.

IS this your first salutation:
You appeare some quarrels to picke,
In few wordes make relation,
Wherfore With me you are so quicke:

Spudeus.

I must in few wordes shew my mynde
whersoeuer I chaunce to come,
Idle and vayne I doo you fynde
Lo, here I haue tolde you the some:
And I knowe well that your parentes
To learne vertew, putte you to schole:
You defraude them of their ententes
For daily you playe the wanton foole.
Also sittyng at schole amonge vs
what doo you els but playe and toye
So that of you, all scholers saye thus:
Gelasimus is a wanton boye.

Turgidior foliis, tunc cum sine pondere succi,

To you I may this verse apply
You are lighter then leaues without sap
For good exercise you let go by

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And your owne selfe in Idlenesse wrap.

Gelasimus.

¶ Of you God sende your frendes moch ioy,
I thynke you wyll proue a sage Solon
O God saue you and sweete saynt Loy
You are lyke to be a wyse man anon,
Se you not lo, a good body
When dyd my frendes to you complayne:
Medle you with your owne study
I doo not your maners disdayne.
Multa facere ect, vbiqz putridum;
About many thynges busy to be
In euery place (qd he) doth stynke.
Curiouse you are in checkyng me
But of your selfe you doo not thynke.
Now syr, because you doo thus reporte.
When dyd you me so Idely fynde:

Spudeus.

¶ Euery houre full of play and sporte
And as light as fethers in the wynde.

Gelasimus.

¶ If I play, I am not Idle in deede
As you your selfe haue testified:

Spudeus.

¶ Idle as he, as sayth saynt Beede
Which is neuer well occupied.

Gelasimus.

Interpon

¶ *Interpone tuis, interdum gaudia curis:*
Sometyme, sayth the Wyse man Cato.
Interlace myrth amonge thy cares.
Wherfore doo sobre men vnto playes go
But to ease their myndes in great affayres.
What sayth the Wyse man Tully:
Gamnyng and pastyme We may vse
As sleepe and other rest truly
Which no honest persone Wyll accuse.
Dum fata sinunt, viuite lati.
Dooth not Seneca this verse Write,
While fortune suffereth, be mery.
And so Wyll I for all your spyte
Play and syng, hay dery dery.
cras nimis vita est crastina, viue hodie,
Yesterdayes life is very late,
Liue to day. Asmoch to say:
Be mery and play With thy mate,
Yea forsoth and that euery day.

Spudeus.

¶ As your memory I doo commende
In that yon can Authours reherse
Yet I must needes you reprehende
Because you abuse a good verse,
I meane the verse of Wyse Cato
Which you dyd englysh competently
But the sentence of Cicero

You passid ouer negligently.
We may right well vse play and game
As we vse sleepe and other rest
But for what cause may we do the same:
In that place, it is manyfest.
Than (saieth hee) whan we haue satisfied
Other maters both weightie and graue
Also whan we haue rectified
Euylles, wont publique weales to depraue
For hee sayeth in his offices
That nature hath not brought vs forthe
To vse playes, games and fantasies
Whiche are maters nothinge worthe.
But rather to seueritie
And to more weighty studies
Meete for men in authoritie
And health for soules and bodies.

Gelasimus.

What speake you of senators
In whose handes cõmon weales did depende
They were great learned orators
Whose wisdome we can not comprehende

Quod medicorum est,

Promittunt medici, tractant fabrilia fabri

That longeth to Phisicians
Thereof they promise and talke largely
Carpenters for their furtherans

Talke and treate of Carpentry:
We are laddes, Scholers and Studentes
Let vs talke, as to laddes is semely:
So shall we please God and our parentes
And men shall iudge well of vs truly.

Spudeus.

¶ Well, of Idlenesse we beganne to speake
Wherto you are moche geuen I doo see
From that I coueyte you to breake
That more studeouse you might be
A fewe sentences you haue caught
Which plainly you doo moche abuse
You apply them not as the Authours taught
But your owne Idlenesse to excuse.

Gelasimus.

¶ You talke here lyke a great deuine
And altogither of Idlenesse
I pray you vouchsafe the same to define
Because it is so great Wickednesse.

Spudeus.

¶ In the Tusculane questions
Of Idlenesse, thus sayth Tully,
As touchyng all honest actions
Idlenesse is an ignary vncomly
Also an ircksomnesse of the mynde
When any good matter is begonne.
And therfore seeketh some other kynde

where

Wherabout vainly it may ronne
As thus you are set to schole now
To learne both vertew and science
This is a good thyng begonne in you
Godly is parentes Wyll and pretence
But a none ircksomnesse of harte
And lothsomnesse of well dooyng
Cause you to take another parte
And to geue your selfe to playyng.

Gelasimus.

A certayne Wyse man geueth Warnyng
Not ouer moche in study to stande
For to some body Arte and learnyng
Are as a sWorde in a mad mans hande

Doctrina scelesti, est gladio insani similis.

Spudeus.

Truthe, a Wicked persone Without dout
To Whom no honest thyng is good
Mischeuously vttereth learnyng out
As one dooth a Weapon that is Wood:
But I Woulde haue you to note tWo thynges
First: The goodly sequels of studentes
Some haue ben counsellours to Kynges
Yea, though thei haue come of poore parentes
What Were the cheife counsels of Rome
I meane When vertew flourished,
Learned and graue in iudgement and dome

Wh

Who their Comunaltie most nourished.
A thousande I coulde reherse by name
Of whom I reade in diuers stories
Which through learnyng haue come to fame,
And attayned vnto high glories.

Qui probus atque idem doctus diademate talem
Quis dignum neget? hic aliis præcellit vt aurum
Est oricalcho nobilius vitroque pyropus.

He that is good and learned withall
Who wyll denie suchone worthy
To enioy an honour royall
Which We call a diademe truly
For suchone dooth other excell
As farre as golde dooth the copper passe
And as precious stone or Birrall
Excelleth counterfaites or glasse
Yet must learned men coune of poore lignage
Example of Marke Tully by name
Vertue is a most sure heritage
For that enhanceth to honour and fame.

Gelasimus.

¶ Truly your Wordes make me to smile
You speake not of the endes of the same
Either they were driuen to exile
Or els suffred death with shame.

Spudeus.

¶ Impute that to ingratitude

Marke this: Suche is euer the reward
Of the ignorant multitude
Whiche dyd neuer vertue regarde
Suffred with shame say you: forsoth no:
Happy are they which for vertues sake
Suffre death, or into exile go
So that pacientlye they doo it take
Also I wyll tell you as I thynke
He that is endued with doctrine
Shall neuer want mony, meate nor drynke
So that to vertue he doo incline
But the fallible chaunces of fate
He shalbe hable to withstande
And if he be deposed from his state
Learnyng preserueth him in any lande.

Ipse tamen vidi nunquam, & vix credere possum
Vel periisse fame, vel mendicasse disertum,

I dyd yet neuer see, the poete dooth say,
And scarsely beleue it I can
That for honger any shall decay
That is in deede a learned man.

Gelasimus.

Frende Spudeus I wyll be playne
To obtayne glory, I bende not my hope
They that coueyte honour to attayne
At noone dayes for the way doo grope.

Ergo honor & fama, & mortalis gloria laus,

Somnia sunt prorsus nil conducentia.

Honor, fame worldly, glory and prayse
Are but dreames, for nothyng profitable
Therfore I am vent nothyng that wayes
For I looke not to be honourable.

Spudeus.

¶ Lo this is your commune fascion
To truncate and destroy the verse
¶ Styll for your owne excusacion
And wyll not the whole sentence reherse.

Somnia sunt prorsus nil conducentia, quando
Serte magis quam virtute acquiruntur.

They are dreames nothyng profitable
But whan: whan by chaūce thei are acquired
Rather than by vertue honourable.
Who so dooth not despyse honour
The same dooth no vertue regarde
For honour in good men euer more
For vertue is a iust reWarde.

Gelasimus.

¶ Ha ha ha, to laugh you compell me
In the faute wherin you dyd me charge
Most euedently in you I see
As I shall declare more at large.

Turpe est doctori cum culpa redarguit ipsum.

It is a foule thyng to a teacher
When the same faute in him is fownde

Whiche he rebuketh in other
Himselfe first to teache he is bownde
I dyd truncate a verse you say
Your later verse now doo you scande
And whether I say true, proue you may,
Or whether as a verse it may stande.

Spudens.

¶ *Serte magis quam virtute acquiruntur, at esto?*

Gelasimus.

¶ *At esto?* Haue you founde, *at esto?*
In your first rehersall that dyd lacke
You talke so moche *de honesto*
That you cast *rectum* at your backe.

Spudens.

¶ That (*at esto*) beginneth a new sentence,
Which had ben prolixe to reherse.

Gelasimus.

¶ I perceyue your cautelouse pretence
That sentence woulde your wordes requite
Because you woulde appeare fautlesse
Takyng vpon you other to blame
What foloweth I wyll expresse
Earnestly without mocke or game:

At esto,

Quod tantum dignis tribuantur, dic mihi nunquid
Corporibus prosint? certe nil. Animis nec
Tantundem: hos inflant potius tumidosq; leuesq;

Nec non ſolicitos reddunt: ſe ſubdere multis,

Et ſeruire ſolet multis, Ambire precari,

Munera largiri quiſquis ſectatur honores.

My fourmour Wordes I muſt agayne reherſe:
For honour (I ſay) I doo not moche care
Hereto tendeth my fourmour verſe
Now theſe in engliſh I Wyll declare.
Be it ſo, that honour and fame
Are geuen only to the Worthy
What profite haue men by the ſame:
They profite nothyng their body
What commoditie are they to the myndes
Euen almoch: they fyll them full of pride
And make them as light as the Wyndes
And fill them With care on euery ſyde
Many muſt one ſerue and many flatter
Pray, ſpeake fayre, and mony pay
Stoutly he muſt beare out the matter
That Wyll haue honour at this day.
Lo, Who ſo hunteth for honour
This diſquietneſſe he ſhall fynde
To the body a longe dolour
And a continuall ſore to the mynde.

O bona paupertas, o non dum cognita diuum

Munera, virtutum cuſtos & amica pudori,

O Good pouertie, o Gods good gifte,
Unknowne is thy cõmoditie

Keper

Keper of vertue thrughe thy shyft
And a very frende to honestie.
A meane state is surest of all
Daungerouse it is highe to clyme
The mightye Okes haue greatest fall
Whan the lowe shrubbes growe out their time

Spudeus.

Your Wordes be good, but you digresse
And declyne muche fro my purpose

Gelasimus.

Go to hardely: your minde expresse
Spare not your learnyng to disclose

Spudeus.

I counsailed you lightnes to leaue
And to giue your selfe to study
To vertue I Wolde haue you to cleaue
Commodiouse to soule and body.
By exaumples auncient and olde
Stearyng vp your hope as I thought
But With sentences stoute and bolde
You haue sett my counsell at nought.
As I coulde haue tolde you by name
Of suche as study in youth haue loued
Whiche haue attayned honour and fame
And Worthy men haue bene proued.
LikeWyse of innumerable
I can tell you also by name

Whiche of byrth haue bene honourable
And yet their endes haue bene shame.
Wherfore this is the cause for a truth
Their tyme full Idely they dyd spende
And would not study in their youthe
Therfore shame & dishonour Was their ende.
Let all youth of Idlenes beWare
For it is the steppedame of vertue
If you be caught ones in her snare
All myschefes belyde Wyll soone ensue.

Otia enim fomes Vitiorum est otia mentem

Ad mala multa trahunt, oti comes ipsa libido est.

It is the prouoking of Wickednes
To many myscheses it draweth the mynde
Uncleennes accompanyeth Idelnes
No greater enemy to mankinde.

Gelasimus.

You may perceiue Well by my Wordes
That I haue not bene ydle alWay
Though somtime I set pytfalles for byrdes
I am not ydle, as perceiue you may.

Spudeus.

Your goodly Wyt I do commende
And to prayse god you haue great cause
But I haue sene that doth mee offende
As I sayed in my former clause.

Emollit otium Vires sicut rubiga ferrum.

¶ Idleneſſe weakeneth the ſtrength
Like as ruſt dooth the yrone freate
Quicke wyttes it dulled at lengthe
And bredeth infirmities great
Haue you not hearde men of grauitie
Wiſhe that they had learned in youthe
And haue bewayled their vanitie
Curſyng themſelfes with their owne mouth

Vidi iamiuuenem præmeret, cum ſerior ætas

Mœrentem tardos præteriſſe dies.

¶ I haue ſene (ſayth Ouid) a yonge man
When with more age preſſed he was
Mournyng in himſelfe now and than
That idely he dyd let the dayes paſſe.
¶ Idleneſſe bryngeth in voluptuouſneſſe
Whom good ſayntes call the deuils bayte
In voluptuouſnes is all wickedneſſe
Wherin youth to catche, the deuyll doth wayt

Gelaſimus.

¶ An olde prouerbe: Yonge ſaint olde deuyll
Whiche to you I may well apply.

Studens.

¶ Thus rather he that in youth is a dreuyll
Is moſt like a deuyll to dye
He that in youthe no vertue wyll vſe
As the commune prouerbe dooth ſay
In age all goodneſſe wyll him refuſe:

Whiche

Whiche to hell is the pathe waye
As no fruite is founde in that tree
Wheron no flowre dyd before appeare
So in age he can come to no degree
Whiche in youthe wyll vse no vertue cleare.

Iuuenis existens multa bona discet.

White thou arte yonge, sayth Menander,
Many good thynges study and learne.
About folye let not your mynde wander
Geue eare to wyse men which doo you warne
Well may you be named Gelasinus
Whiche scornfull doeth signifye
For whatsoeuer good men discusse
You tourne it to a scorne vtterly.

Gelasinus.

And Spudeus may well be your name
Whiche signifieth studious
You study to gette honour and fame
So that you wyll be counte curious.

Spudeus.

Not so, I trust there is a meane,
I haue learned to vse moderatie
Not so wyll I studye leane
That I shall forgette honeste.
I study not vertue to acquire
Fame and honour therby to attayne
Vertue for her owne sake I desyre

In whom alone honour dooth remayne.

Propter se virtus petitur non propter honorem.

Gelasimus.

¶ I pray you let all this reasonyng passe
And tell me this: may I not sometyme play?

Spudeus.

¶ You remembre what our talke was?
As sleepe and other rest Tully dooth say.

Gelasimus.

¶ I am glad of that by this light
I wish that my maister so wolde say.
Men vse to rest and sleepe euery night
Than so might I play euery day.

Spudeus.

¶ Whether you may or no, you doo
Yea truly, and that without measure
And suche wantonnesse you adde therto
That none other in your play haue pleasure.

Gelasimus.

¶ In good fayth I play not other to please
I vse to play for myne owne solace.

Spudeus.

¶ But in your play you doo other displease
And in so dooyng you passe the place.

Est modus in rebus sunt certi denique fines

Quos vltra citraq́ nequit consistere rectum

¶ There is a meane in all thynges

There

Therbe also certayne limites pyght
Beyonde the which if you passe the strynges,
Nothyng that you doo, can be doone right
In your play, and in all your affayres
Learne you honest maners to vse
Let not idlenesse catche you in her snares
And euyll company doo you refuse

Corrumpunt etiam Sanctos commercia praua,

Euyll company dooth corrupte alway
Euen those that be well disposed
Conceale no falshed night nor day
But of you let it be disclosed
Serue God daily before any thyng
Feare him, beware his lawes to offende
Honour, loue, and truly serue the kyng
And where fautes be, learne to amende:
6 Your Father, Mother and Maister
3 Loue, feare, serue, and gentely obay:
Of their goodes be ye no waster
With truthe helpe to gette that you may.
Of tonge and hande be you euer true
[illegible] y oathes to sweare
[illegible] ce doo you rewe:
[illegible] y beare.
[illegible] on
[illegible] y

And

And you shall neuer go out of the way.

Gelasimus.

¶ I haue not so litle wyt, good frynde,
But that I perceyue your intent
I thanke you both with hearte and mynde
Your counsell is honest and prudent
This one thyng of you I woulde desyre
Daily that we may togither talke
At suche a tyme as you shall requyre
When you are best disposed to walke.

Spudeus.

¶ I shalbe content with all my harte:
Fare ye well, God haue you in his kepyng.

Gelasimus.

¶ Seyng that you wyll hence departe
God preserue you wakyng and slepyng.

Finis.

¶ Here after [illegible]

the Dialogue con[illegible]
nuyng of [illegible]
Which [illegible]
Wh[illegible]

Eda.

GOd fortune this day (I trust) hath wrought
For yonder cõmeth she, Whõ I haue sought
I am glad that I haue mette With you Agna.

Agna.

And I as glad to see you mery Eda
It ts a straunge thinge to see you here alone.

Eda.

My syster is but euen now fro me gone
And in dede We should haue gone togyther
But that I did see you commming hyther
To speake With you is my tarying here
I thought to salute you since you Were so nere.

Agna.

I thanke you gentle Eda for your good Will
Tell me Well you With your Father still.

Eda.

Yea I thanke god, and stil I purpose to doo
For I haue none so good a frende to go too
I see Whereto this Wretched World is bent
Therfore I minde not other houses to frequent
In our last talke you did to me disclose
A goodly sentence of holy saint Ambrose
Which While I lyue I shall beare in minde
For great vertue forsothe therin I fynde.

Agna.

Good lord do you those Wordes so long remembre

Eda.

Eda.

If I ſhould forget them, my wyt were ſlender.

Agna.

As I dyd recyte them, can you ſay them again:

Eda.

To here me ſay them, wyl you take the payne

Agna.

Yea truly that I wyll, yeuen with all my harte
And helpe you, yf you myſſe in any parte.

Eda.

That virgin whiche for Chriſt doth enquire
To be amonge rude people, ought not to deſyre.
Seldom ſene without cauſe in the market place
Neuer alone in the ſtreetes to ſhewe her face.
It is not virgin like to be high in voyce
Neither in vyle wordes or ſonges to reioyce
Mayden like without nycenes in her pace
No token of wantonnes in her eies or face.
Lo Sister Agna theſe be the wordes I ſuppoſe
Whiche you taught me out of Saint Ambroſe.

Agna.

Saint Ambroſe wrote this of the virgin Mary
From whoſe ſentence you do not muche vary
Let her humilitie and fourme of vertue
Be examples for you all your life to enſue.
Who ſo doth the reward of Mary requyre
Muſt folowe Maries vertue, with humble deſire

How

Howe meke, how pure how holy she was in dede
You know, so ỹ more to declare We shal not nede.
To know good thinges is right commendable
But to followe them is most profitable.
I prayse greatly your goodly memory
Yet I must warne you to beware of vaynglory
That is a vice of so craftie a vilany
That it seketh euen vertue to accompany.
Therfore a certaine Doctor doth monishe
All persons whiche in vertue do florysshe
Of vainglory aboue all thinges to beware
For he calleth it a crafty gynne or snare
wherby Satan wayteth to catche the vertuose
And to frustrate them of their godly purpose.

Eda.

I thanke you truly, for your godly councell
Your wordes I finde as true as the Gospell
God to wytnesse, I haue a purpose sure
To kepe both body and minde cleane and pure
So that neither consent worde nor countenance
Shall appere vayne, by goddes help & gouernance
Yet I haue had a delight to be commended
And therin I wotte well, I haue offended
For though I do thinges neuer so commendable
Yet am I but a seruaunt vnprofytable.
I do but that whiche is commended to me
Neither all that, as in the Gospell I do see..

Agna.

Agna.

¶ Because you remẽbre so well Christes doctrine
I wyl teach you a lesson of holy saynt Austine:
Vainglory of this worlde is great vanitie
And not els but a falible suauitie
An vnfruitfull labour, a perpetuall feare
A sublimitie perelesse for any to beare
A beginnyng without good prouidence
And an ende with vnprofitable penitence.
Lo good Eda, this is a vertuouse lesson
Ponder it with earnest discrecion
And with your chaste mynde and puritie
Pray to God to geue you humilitie
For somoche the more to God you are precidouse
How moch in your own eyes, you ar contemtuos

Eda.

¶ I trust in God also this lesson to beare away,
And to folow it, I wyll do that I may:
But gentle Agna, doo you not yet departe
For to you I wolde shew the secretes of my harte

Agna.

¶ Your request standeth with so good reason
That I must nedes tary with you a season.

Eda.

¶ Truly one thyng maketh me moch to lament
And that is, somtime for myne owne documente
I wold keepe company with Wades very fayne

And

And I fynde the moſt of them raumpyſh & vaine
And like as many of them are paſt all ſhame
So feare they not God, neithrr honour his name.
If I chaunce with any of them to walke,
Of beauty, or of gay raiment is their talke
Elles of marriage, or of yonge bachelers
To ſpeake ſhortly: they are vayne clatterers.
Speake to them of God, and of obedience
They fare as perſons without intelligence
So that in their company kepyng in deede
Of .ii. perilles, it is expedient to take heede:
One is, (if I be not like to them) obloquie,
The other is (if I be lyke the company)
Lewde condition, by talke vnconly:
Whiche thynges are a great greefe to me truly.

Agna.

Children and ſeruauntes are repreſentations
Of their parentes and maiſters abhominations
Like as many parents ar without the fere of god
So from their maners the children be ſeldome od
My counſell is ſuche Maydes company to forſake,
What they talke of you, no mater it dooth make
So that a pure conſcience beareth you recorde
That faithfully you ſerue Jeſus chriſt our lorde
Neuer be you without ſome vertuous booke
Wherein at voyde times you may diligently looke

¶ In good bookes truly is all my solace
For in them I learne thynges wysely to compace
First how I shal feare god our lorde omnipotent
To my Prince and parentes to be obedient
To loue my familiers, to honour my betters
To pitye the needye, and to forgeue my detters.

Agna.

As I wyll you to vse bokes well, if you haue any
So I counsell you not to vse very many
For so many heades, so many wyttes they say
Amonge the whiche all take not the right way.
For some haue written amoche for affection
As for any good zeale or instruction
And as virginitie is nothyng without humilitie
So neither of thē is ought worth without veritie
Uertuous in good persons are so lynked togither
That one can not auayle without the other:
What is virginitie worth, ioyned with errour
Nothyng but payne takyng for infernal terrour.
That mynde can neuer be sincere and pure
Which in the fayth of Christ standeth not sure.
In Christes Testament be stable eruditions
Therafter frame your lyfe and conditions.
Saynt Ambrose wrote the lyfe of saynt Cecily
Wherin are notable examples verely.

Eda.

¶ Sauyng your tale, I haue read the same story

Where

Wher I find many thigs sounding to gods glory
And cheefly this I noted in saynt Cecily
That the Gospell she bare in her hert secretly
And as a Bee busely goeth from flame to flame,
So she in all thynges serued God day and houre,
And whē other dyd syng & with instrumēts play
Unto our Lorde in her mynde she dyd thus pray
O Lorde let my hart be pure and unmaculate
That I be not confounded with the reprobate
She was no vayne babler of the holy Gospell
But framed her lyfe accordyng to Christes cōsel

Agna.

O Well noted good syster Eda in deede,
God graūt you in knowledge forward to procede
As you say, bablers there are to many
The floures they haue, but thei tast not the hony
Saynt Cecily kepte the Gospell in her brest
But in the mouthe nowe only it dooth rest.

Eda.

Better it had ben neuer it to haue knowne
Then so vily in the stretes to haue it throwne.
Sayntes in tyme past studyed the Gospell
To theintent that in good lyfe they myght excell,
As it is to see very well in their lyues,
Yea both of men & women, maydes and wyues.

Agna.

Haue you red the lyfe of saynt Agnes?

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For in them I learne thynges wysely to compace
First how I shal feare god our lorde omnipotent
To my Prince and parentes to be obedient
To loue my familiers, to honour my betters
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Agna.

Haue you red the lyfe of saynt Agnes?

Eda.

¶ I readde it ones in Englysh doutlesse
If it be truly translated as it was
All other Virgins of that age she dyd passe
Thirtene yeres of age, lytle past infancye
Marterdome she suffred With great constancye.

Agna.

¶ Saynt Ambrose, as it is thought by the stile
Dyd her lyfe in latine eligantly compile
At .xiii. yeares of age (saith he) death she lost
And founde eternall lyfe, though her lyfe it cost,
Full Well loued she the floure of Virginitie
That Wouide die rather then spotte her integrite

Eda.

¶ What I am hable to doo, I doo not fynde
But Without doute I am of the same mynde
Virginitie: oh can there be any greater pleasure,
Into this World We brought none other treasure

Agna.

¶ It is euen so: Whan into this World We came,
Moch misery We brought as the childrē of Adam
Yet With vs We brought this commoditie
In thought, Worde and deede, pure virginitie.
Nothyng in mankynde God loueth more
Nothyng so moche aduaunceth his honour
Therfore scripture compareth virginitie to Bisse
The finest lynnen cloth that euer Was or is,

Writers

wryters therof Whiche do the nature knowe
Say that it is a cloath as White as snowe
As Bysse doth all one lynen passe in puritie
So aboue all vertues god loueth virginitie
It ouerpasseth mans nature Doctors do say
And make men like vnto Aungels allway
Greater (saye they) is virgyns victory
Than the triumphe of Aungels in glory.

Eda.

Where as you speake of that kinde of vesture
Bysse is a precious cloth, that is most sure.
But yere it come vnto the perfection
It requireth great labour and correction
For before to the whytenes they can it bring
They vse to beate it oft, and oft it to wryng.

Agna.

You say trouthe, yeuen so virginitie
Must eftsones be beate With humilitie
It must be Wronge With abstinence and prayer
Before it be perfight, pure, cleane and fayer
It must be rubbed With the soape of penaunce
And bleached in the hote sunne of sufferaunce
Here to must We adde perseuerance to the ende
Whiche is our lyfe in defence therof to spende
Thus shall We make a fayer garment of Bysse
And therWith entre, before the kynge of blysse.

Eda.

Lord

Lord Why haue not the christen maids this talke
When they meete, or togither doo Walke

Agna.

¶ I told you before that the parentes negligence
Causeth most this, and like inconuenience
The filthy perswations of suche as be olde
Kyndle moche euyll and make maides euer bold.
Agayne, the bringyng vp of them in idlenes
Is thoccasion of moche vnthriftenes
They haue no respecte also vnto the company
Which to virginitie is a great vilany
Whosoeuer toucheth pitche shalbe defiled
So by euyll company many one is begiled.

Eda.

¶ Where as you talke of suche as be aged
I know We that some haue to filthely raged
Hauyng no respecte their vile mouthes to open
Shewyng therWith many an vnchast token
Yea forsothe, & that before yonge girles & boyes,
Wherby they learne to practise Wicked toyes.
Auncient Women & Wyues assemblying togither.
Many times do not their talke honestly consider,
Neither What they speke, Where, nor before Whom
No truly lytle Wisdome Without, & lesse at home.

Agna.

¶ O lytle regarde they the terrible sentences
Of Christ our Lord for suche great offences.
Better were it for suche a corrupte persone

Aboute his necke to haue hanged a mylstone
And so in the myddest of the sea drowned to be
Than to offend any lytle one that beleueth in me
Also for euery ydle worde spoken in vayne
They shall render a strayte compte agayne
For they doo not only themselues condempne
But they cause other Gods lawe to contempne.

Eda.

¶ Uerely syster Agna, my mynde doth me geue
That the worde of God suche men do not beleue,
I wolde they heard what God speaketh by Esay
A boye of an hundreth yere olde shall dye
Namely whē he taketh maners to age correspōdēt
That is grauntie, discretion, and a mynde sapient
Understande me not here in any wyse
That I go about aged persons to dispyse.

Agna.

¶ No I dare saye, for you are taught otherwyse
Before the honorable and aged, dooe thou aryse
The order of nature where as is intelligence
Teacheth vs age in all men to reuerence
But where as euyll maners in aged men be
As from the face of a serpent we ought to flie
Thre thynges saith Syrach my soule dooth hate
Wherwith I am greued and at great debate:
A poore man proude, a ryche man a lyer
An olde man a foole, and full of fleshly desyer.

Eda

Eda.

¶I flee the company bothe of olde and yonge
Whyche be not honest in gesture dede and tonge
With the holy, thou shalt learne to be holy
Amonge fooles We shall learne but foly
Wherfore yf I see any bent to inhumanytie.
I auoyde his foly and lewde vanitie.
Wyth non do I vse to commen or dispute
But Wyth such, by Whom I may haue sum fruit.

Agna.

¶For so doyng God be thanked for his grace
A token that you intende vertue to enbrace.
I redde in a booke of virginitie lately
Where one compareth it vnto a Lyly.
Whiche if it be towched, as he doth expresse
A none it wyl lose all the fayre Whytenes.
So yf virginitie be touched a lytle
Eyther With vncleane thoughtes or Wordes ydle
It wyll lose the purytie therof anone
Yea and the sauour pleasing god wyl be gone.
Wherfore hedge We in our garden With faith sure
That our Lily from touching may be kept pure.

Eda.

¶I haue redde in a sermon of good authorytie
That abstynence is a frende to virgynitie
Contrary Wyse, a full bely is an enemye
Unto all maydes that Wyl lyue honestly

J

I haue hearde my father talke of that mater
He sayd that maides wold fast with bred & water
And dyd labour almoch, & toke paynes as great
As any day that they eate their meales and meat
But as fastyng is tourned into surfaityng
So is worke tournd into idle leuteryng.
This I see in all states now for a surety
The most parte are geuen to fleshly libertye
As sum withold ỳ truth of god in vnrightousnes
So of his word thei make a cloke of maliciousnes
Yea yong & olde, maydes, widowes mien & wiues
As it doth appeare to playnly by their lyues.
To the good towne they must go to drinke wyne
Though they come agayne as dronke as swyne.

Agna.

Amõg the Romayns no greater offẽce ther was
Then for womẽ at Tauernes their tymes to pas
A lawe ther was, that they might no wine drinke
Whiche was no euyl truly I do thynke.
But whan yonge gyrles wyll be wyne bybbars
It followeth, that they intende to be euyl lyuers
Wine sayeth Hierom, youth and lustines
Is a doble kyndeling vnto voluptuousnes.
Madnes it is to adde oyle vnto a fyre
But more madnes to giue youth their desyre.
There is better pathe to lyfe euerlasting
Than (is being in the fayth) prayer and fasting.

Eda.

¶ May you tary no longer here trowe you?

Agna.

The time draweth nere that I must depart now.

Eda.

¶ Let vs talke .iii. or .iiii. sentences mo
And than in goddes name you shall go.
Me thinke that there is a great falte in parentes
Concernyng their doughters attyre & garmentes

Agna.

¶ As all things are cleane to them that be cleane
So in all thynges there is an honest meane
I doo not moche passe of the outwarde vesture
So the mynde be inorned with christen ornature
Asmoche mckenes may be vnder a veluet gowne
As in one that wereth the worst coat in the toune
& asmoch pride in him that wereth a patched coat
As in him that weareth golde about his throate,
Superfluous disguisyng is very euyll
But paintyng of the hearre cometh of the deuyll.
o womã saith Ambrose, ÿ blottestout gods pictur
When thou with paintyng alterest nature.
I can not prayse these new founde disguisynges
Through pride they were of Satans dyuysinges
A holy man sayeth, that externall superfluitie
Is a sygne of an internall vanytie
Whersoeuer sayeth hee, nyce garmentes ye finde

You

You may be sure ther to haue the nicenes of mind
Wolde to god in garmentes there were more mo-
I alow clenlines in apparel wt honestie. (destie

Eda.

¶ As of vertuouse maters here we do talke
So in our lyuyng, God gyue vs grace to walke.
Howe say you by singing and dauncing
To synne I iudge them a great aduauncing
My father wil haue me to play at the Lute
Also at the Virginalles wherin is small fruite.

Agna.

¶ As in godly maters you are very wyse
So in thinges indifferent be not to nyce.
The best giftes of God may bee abused
The giftes therfore maye not be accused,
But they whiche abuse goddes good giftes
As all they do whiche are carnall vnthriftes
To can singe truly is right commendable
Vf the cyrcumstances be a lowable.
As the songe to be good, sunge with good intent
The persone the time the place honest and decent.
In like maner at instrumentes to playe
A goodly gift of God it is truly I saye.
But abused, they may be through vaine pride

And whan better thinges for them are laide aside
In holy scripture We finde that yonge damsels
Sang Psalmes, songes, & played at Tymbrels
Suche Instrumentes as they vsed than
Whiche haue not ben rebuked of any Wise man.
But those thinges Were euer done in time
To the honour of god, Wherin Was no crime.
I tell you in this thing my poore aduisement
But leane you to a Wyse bodies Iudgement.
Nowe as for dauncing, I Wot not What to say
Holy men haue spoken against it til this day.
And though kyng Dauid daũced before the Arke
I Wot not What to say for I am no clarke.
But this is the sentence of some that be Wyse
Dauncing can be scacely vsed Without vice
For by their owne iudgement you can not daunce
Without a great pride and secrete enuy. (finely

Eda.

C God saue me then from learnyng that arte
Herodias doughter played a Wicked parte
For through her daũsyng, most holy saynt Jhon
By Herodes commaundment Was beheded anon
Pride and enuy are synnes Which I detest,
To avoyde thoccasion of them I thynke it best
When I see that any vertue therby dooth chaũce
Then diligently Wyll I learne to daunce,
God graunt me grace to learne him to please

To

To my minde that shalbe the greatest ease.

Agna.

I must byd you fare well tyl to morowe
Thā to talke wō you more, a time I wil I borow

Eda.

I thanke you hartely for your great payne
I shal thinke longe tyl I speake with you again.
I desyre you, this night in your meditation
Deuise in your minde against our next cōmunica-
how I may serue god as he doth require (tion
Let this be our next talke I do you desyre.

Agna

With a good wyl you shal knowe my harte
God haue you in his keping I must departe.

Eda.

God be with vs in farewel and greeting
And send vs againe a mery meeting. Amen.

Finis.

Here after folowth

A Dialogue concernyng wysdom and wyll. Who reason togither thus.

To

To spende the time honestly a season
I thinke this to be a talke conuenient
Of wyll and wisdom a while to reason
And who maye iustly be called sapient
I thinke it meete therfore wysdom to defyne
Tully calleth it a knowledge or science
Of maters aswell heauenly and diuyne
As of humane thinges, in thordre of prudence.
So that perfightely toknowe goddes wyll
That is, what of man, god doth requyre
And the same in worde and dede to fulfyll
Is the highest wisdom wherto man can aspyre.
Also what percayneth to cumly ordre
Amonge men at all times to be vsed
And to kepe the same in euery bordre
Is wysdom, of none to be refused.
According hereto a Christian Poete
Certaine pleasant versis in Latin doth wryte
Whiche if a whyle you wyl be quyete
As well as I can, I wyll recyte.

Sed fortasse aliquis quærit sapientia quid sit:
Nil aliud certe est nisi prima scientia, per quam
Mens pura & nulla mortali pondere præssa
Libera terrenis affectibus atria cœli
Scandit, & æthera cum dijs versatur in aula,

Sum perchaunce wyll aske, what is sapience
Nothing elles but a science principall

wherby

Wherby (a minde spotted with no vncongruence
Neither pressed with any synne capitall
But free from affections terrestriall)
Unto the heauenly palaces doth ascende
And is conuersaunt with spirites celestiall
In heauen I meane, wher god is without ende.
Many noble sentences be in that place
Right worthy to be talked of in dede
But because they requyre more time and space
I leaue them and wyl to other thinges procede
As in fewe persons is this Sapience
So in all men lyuing is there a Wyll
Whiche through stoborne disobedience
Many one, both soule and body doth spyll.

Wylle.

Somwhat of wyll here by your pacience
I must saye according to learnyng
And as you haue praysed sapience
So of Wyll, let me say my meanyng.

Wisdome.

Wyll playeth the wanton boy now and than.
Whan Wyll without Wyt, reuelleth alone
He vndoeth many a Wylfull man
Who wolde repent whan the tune is gone

Wyll.

Wyll is an appetite gyuen to goodnes
According to prudent Aristotles mynde

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In the fyrst boke of Rethoryckes he doth expresse
The same sentence, or moche of that kynde
And the same Poete which you dyd reherse
(A Poete? no forsoth: rather a Deuine)
Ryght nobly speaketh of wylle in a verse
As though wylle, doth not to euyll encline.

Suntq; voluntatis bona plura & quatuor horum
Præcipua existunt, prudencia, iustitia atque
Grandia quæ aggreditur fortis discrimina virtus,
Net non quæ frenis nos temperat atq; modestos,
Efficit. &c.

There be many good thynges longyng to wylle
And cheefly .iiii. Prudence, and Justice,
Strength, that noble vertue gret thiges to fulfyl
Temperance, who restrayneth sensuall vice.
These .iiii. be called vertues Cardinall:
For of them all other vertues depende
Of the which vertues, wylle is thoriginall
Wherfore, wylle I may iustly commende.

Wisdome.

¶ I say styll, that Witte is a crafty boye,
Fayne he wolde his wilfull foly excuse,
He hathe played euen nowe a subtle toye.
For a learned sentence he dyd abuse
Aristotle in the place of you aledged
Where as you say, he dooth wylle define,
Is of you truncated and abredged
Contrary to the Philosophers doctrine,

wylle

Wyll is an appetite of goodnes sayeth he
Coniuncte or rather subiecte to reason
Haye whan wyll to reason doth agree
Than all thinges be done well, and in season
But I speake onely of that sturdy wyll
Whiche to obay reason doth proudly disdayne
Than both it selfe, it doth destroy and spyll
And putteth many another to payne.
In that wyll, whyche to reason doth consent
Is all kynde of good vertues conteyned
Than it doth nothing wherof it should repent
For all vyces therby are restreyned.

Wyll.

We thynke you make lytle difference
Betwyxt wyll and sensualytie
Wyll is equall with sapience
Yea and hygher in authorytie.
For what could sapience or reason do
Or any other power of the minde
Except wyll, wolde consent therto
Who hath power both to loase and to bynde.
Only in wyll is free lybertie
Whan wysdom and reason haue deuysed
Wyll hath this power for a suertie
To let all that they haue practysed.
Example. Reason and wisdom do teache

Perfoꝛme this they can not Whiche they pꝛeache
Except Wyll therto ſhall lybertie gyue.

Wiſdome.

The pꝛide of this ſtoboꝛne Wyll, bꝛeaketh out
And by lytle and lytle dooth theſelfe declare
Wyll is pꝛoude, Wyll is ſturdy and ſtout
And yet miſerable, beyng lefte bare
Euery mã thꝛough Wyl alone is made a Wꝛetche
But the moꝛe Wꝛetched as Auſten dooth publiſh
When the ſame Wyll dooth it ſelfe ſtꝛetche,
So farre that he may his deſyꝛe accompliſh
And alſo it foloweth, that thꝛough euyll Wyll
Not euery man a Wꝛetche is made
But alſo the moꝛe Wꝛetched When he may fulfyll
That euyll Wherto euyll Wyll doth perſwade,
Thus he meaneth, the moꝛe poWer Wyll hathe
To doo euyll, the moꝛe Wꝛetched it is,
The moꝛe poWer Wyll hathe reaſon to ſcathe,
The moꝛe bonde, and the moꝛe dooth a mis.

Wyll.

You haue talked of euyll Wyll a long ſeaſon
I pꝛaye you What doo you call the ſame euyll Wil.

Wyſdome.

That Wyll Which is not ſubiecte to reaſon
But ſeketh his ſenſuall rage to fulfyll

Now to make answere to your comparison.
Where you preferre Wyll before reason,
In dede, Wyll, and his wylfull garison
Compare With God from Whō all goodnes come
But in this poynt, Wisdome doth Wyll excell
Wisdome is alway good, and Wyll somtime euyl
Wisdome obaieth God, Wyll somtime doth rebel
Wisdom, of God is led, Wyl somtime of the deuyl
And let not Wyll reioyce in his Wicked power
For the more power he hath to commit euyll
The more seruile, the more vile day and hower,
And the more draweth he vnto the deuyll.

Wylle.

To your sentence I can not moche disagre
In few words you haue shewed ẏ bōdage of Wyl
Now I praye you declare how it may be free
And I Wyll humbly harke vnto your skyll.

Wysdome.

Whan Wyll to Wisdome Wyllyngly doth encline
(Now What Wysdome is I declared before)
Than Wyll, not of merytes, but of grace diuyne
Is enfrencheled, and made free euermore

Recte igitur quidam liber solus sapiens est
Dixere. Hic etenim solus ratione Magistra
Castigat motus animi sensumqz rebellem.

Certayne learned men forsoth sayed ryghtly

A wyse man onely hath a free wyll
For a wyse man through lady reason aptely
Chastiseth euyl lustes, & the flesshe rebelling stil.
Keke this order. And than the wyll is free
With Salomon aske of God his sapience
Than to reasons rule alway agree
And holde sensualitie in obedience
He that can observe purely these .iiii. lynes
Not only a vertuouse man I do hym call
But also I compare hym to a diuines
And to the highest learned of them all.

Wyll.

I haue Ministred communication
Sumwhat contrary to verytie
That by your wyttie declaration
I might be brought out of ambyguitie.
For by reasonyng and argument
Maters of contrauersy and in doubt
Are opened, made playne and euydent
And the veritie searched and boulted out.
Now to God humble thankes let vs rendre
For his wonderful Worke in mankynde
Who our misery so greatly dyd tender
That he sent his sonne his lost shepe to fynde.

Wyldome.

I say this before dyner or supper;

Glory

Glory, honour and prayse to God the father
For all his benefites geuen vnto vs
Who by his spirite vouchsafe vs to gather
Into the true fayth of his sonne Christ Jesus,
We beseche that one God in Trinitie
To blesse his creatures for vs prepared,
Rendre we thankes With all humilitie
For his kyndnesse to vs in all thynges declared
He graunte vs his giftes so meanly to take
That our bodyes may be in subiection
Wherwith, suche a lyuely sacrifice We may make
As before him may be in acception.

Will.

The keepe our tongues from talke of vanitie
From backbityng, sclaunderyng or lyng
At our table let there be suche humanitie
As becometh his people bothe liuyng and diyng.
In Gods name now take your refection
We haue ended our talke for this season
After your meale I must make an obiection
Concernyng the highest parte called Reason.

After dyner or supper say this

Wildome.

Approche my frynde I pray you & come neare
Go to nowe, propugne your obiection

Wher-

And in the truth, shewe you a direction.

Will.

¶ You sayed before that Wyll is than free
Whan it is subiecte to reason and sapience
This sentence to reason doth not agree
There is no fredom where as is obedience.

Wisdom.

¶ If Wyll hath any lybertie at all
The most is reason and Wysdome to obay
The freedom of Wyll, of it selfe is but small.
Whan it refuseth reason to be his stay.
To haue lycence to do euyll is no lybertie
But the most vyle bondage that euer was
Now reason thrOugh grace hath this prOpertie
To cause Wyll in the Way of truth to passe.
He that doth synne, is seruaunt vnto synne
O What seruitude is lyke vnto this
NOnother aduauntage therby do they Wynne
But hell, where Satan the Deuyll dampned is.
Contrary Wyse, there is no lybertie
Lyke the subiection vnto vertue
FOr that erecteth the soule into felycitie
If vnto the ende We do it ensue.
Beholde, here obedience is lybertye
And lybertie (yf I may it so name)
Is vyle bondage and vtter seruylitie

Whiche

whiche bringeth many a man to shame.

Wyll.

C You haue well satisfyed my mynde
But where as you talked summwhat of reason
I wolde knowe what reason is in kynde
whom you saye, Wyll must obay in season.

Wysdome.

Est autem ratio lumen quoddam atq; animi vis
Qua curuum a recto secernimus, atq; ab honesto
Turpe. Oculusq; solet mentis quandoq; vocari.

Reason is a certayn lyght & strength of the mind
Wherby we discerne the croked from the right
The fylthy from the honest therby we do fynde
Therfore of the mynde it is named the light.
Lo here is this great Clearkes dyffinition
Wherby what reason is you may learne
Also reason is a perfecte erudition
By the whyche good from euyll we discerne.
Now reason, as the phylosopher sayeth
Euer more approcheth vnto the beest
A directry of lyfe an handmayd of fayeth
Whiche loueth vertue, and doth vice deteste.

Wyll.

C Than I see yf Wyll foloweth reason
It shall consent to all that is honest
But sensualytie worketh moche treason

And

And doth both reason and Wyll greatly molest
But Where as in your diffinicion aforesayd
Of the mynde also you made mencion
This terme (mynde) ought to be Wayed
Therin let vs also knowe your intencion.

Wysdome.

Mens igitur sol est animæ, sunt sidera sensus.

The mynde to the soule is a sunne bryght
Whiche illumineth the same With her cleere shyns
By the minde the soule seeth to go right
And nedeth not out of the Way to declyne.
As for the senses are as the dyurne starres
Whiche giue a shyne, but not to Worke by
Yea against reason they be obstacles and barres
The motions of reason to stoppe or deme.
Senses alonely do the brute beastes beutyfie
But reason and senses both do enorne mankinde
Yet reason excelleth senses verely
As a man a lyue excelleth a man dead and blind.
Reason is the more noble parte in dede
For to heauenly thinges the minde it doth cary
Senses holde man downe, on the earth to feede
And therby man from beastes do not much vary.

Wylle.

If you put me in memory of a sentence
Whiche the great clarke Lactantius doth Write

Wolde

Wolde to God I had the wyt and science
As he ment it, the same purely to receyte.
That high artyficer God our parent dere
Hath giuen to man, sense, reason and sapience
That man to be made of him it might appere
For God is sense, reason, wisdom & intelligence
Of all the creatures that euer God did make
In man he shewed most his omnipotencye
Alas why dyd Adam his precept forsake
For through synne he lost his innocencye
Wysdom, Wyll, reason, mynde be here declared
If you wyll speake a worde or .ii. of sence
Whiche God in man hathe also prepared
I wyll no more trouble you, but depart hence.

Wisdome.

Sum learned men call sense a powre passyue
That is suffering obiectes variable
Sensualytie is an appetite sensityue
To the outwarde felyng very delectable.
But senses are deuyded of phylosophers
Into senses externall and internall
Auicenna, Thomas, and their folowers
Speake also of senses Intellectuall.
Touchyng the senses externall ther be fyue
That is, seyng, hearyng, smellyng, tastyng, felyng
Bothe men and beastes as many as be a lyue

Haue these fyue commonly, Without differyng
These are as wyndowes to intelligence
For by them all thyngs enter into vnderstanding
Of the whiche thinges, reason and sapience
Apoynt an ordre after their determining.
We myght minister hereof more mater
Than to the auditors should be profitable
Of many thinges to vtter muche clater
Is losse of tyme, and nothyng laudable.

Wyll.

There is not a worde spoken this season
But therof some fruite I haue gathered.
The knowledge I haue not farther to reason
whiche I trust is right well considered.
To God yf it wyll please you thankes to giue
whiche wyth hys benefytes doth vs feede
We shall do but our deutye, and I beleue
That in all our actes, the better we shal speede.

Wysdome.

Thankes to the o father our creator
Thankes to the Jesus Christ the Way & veritie
Thankes to the o spirite our consolator
Thankes to the one blessed God in Trynitie.
Amen. Finis.

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In the yeare of our Lord God
M.D.L.VIJJ.

The .v. daye of Marche.

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